

Advocates around the world celebrate Stem Cell Awareness Day September 23

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Updated on 9/22/09 to include updated activities.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., September 21, 2009 – On September 23, The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, the state stem cell agency (CIRM) will mark Stem Cell Awareness Day in partnership with research institutions, patient groups and educators around the world.

In a statement urging people to mark the day, CIRM president Dr. Alan Trounson declared "Stem cell science is advancing at as fast a pace as it is in large part because of pressure from grass roots campaigns that have created momentum to secure government funds for research and challenged researchers to think differently about the pace of bringing basic discoveries to the clinic. Stem Cell Awareness Day was created as a way to spread information and excitement about this field and to fertilize those grass roots to keep the pressure on everyone to further accelerate the field."

To mark Stem Cell Awareness Day in California, CIRM grantees are visiting some 40 high school science classrooms throughout the state as guest lecturers. More than 3,000 high school students are anticipated to participate in presentations by stem cell scientists on September 23.

CIRM is also sponsoring a Stem Cell Awareness Day poetry contest. Entries were received from around the world. The winner (or winners) will receive a framed stem cell image of their choice from those on the CIRM Flickr photostream. The winning poem(s) will also be posted on the Stem Cell Awareness Day and CIRM Websites and may be printed in the CIRM annual report.

Stem Cell Awareness Day Activities

Messages in support of Stem Cell Awareness Day, including a statement from Dr. Trounson and proclamations from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California, Governor Jim Doyle of Wisconsin, Mayor Gavin Newsom of San Francisco and Mayor Jerry Sanders of San Diego can be found on www.stemcellday.com.

In addition to activities being organized by CIRM, numerous activities and events are planned for the day that aim to foster greater understanding about stem cell research and the range of potential applications for disease and injury. Please visit www.stemcellday.com for the most current list of activities. Planned activities include:

The World Stem Cell Summit is taking place in Baltimore September 21-23 and will note Stem Cell Day on the 23rd.

Monash University, Australia, is hosting a Webcast linking international stem cell scientists. Video seminars and live Q&A by leaders in the field addressing a wide range of topics related to stem cell science and clinical advances. For more information, visit: <http://www.stemcellawarenessday.com>

NYSTEM, New York State Stem Cell Science is sponsoring a stem cell image contest. The program is soliciting from New York state investigators stem cell images that are visually compelling and effectively convey scientific content. In addition, NYSTEM is a public screening of "Terra Incognita: Mapping Stem Cell Research on the 23rd at 7 p.m. at the David Axelrod Institute. Visit <http://stemcell.ny.gov/> for more information.

The University of Minnesota will celebrate Stem Cell Awareness Day.

The **Canadian Stem Cell Foundation** and **Canada's Stem Cell Network** is launching **The Stem Cell Charter**, a major global outreach initiative to build a grassroots following of stem cell science supporters, on Stem Cell Awareness Day. Sign the Charter - Renew the World: The Stem Cell Charter is an interactive, web-based document that affirms the importance of stem cell science to all humanity. It forms the basis of a growing community of scientists, community leaders and the public who believe in the importance of stem cell science, and are lending their voice, time or other resources to champion the stem cell cause. Sign the Charter at stemcellcharter.org Choose and personalize your very own cell, and tell the world why you support this vital area of research. Watch the Rock Star

Scientists video as well as mini videos about research that's going on in the field.

The Parkinson's Institute, Sunnyvale, CA (www.thepi.org) – is hosting a public talk on Parkinson's disease. Learn about the latest developments in Stem Cell Research from leading authorities in the field, and how these developments are helping us understand Parkinson's disease. Contact: mchavez@thepi.org or 408.734.2800

UC Davis, Davis, CA – is hosting Huntington's Disease and Stem Cell Research Presentations from 5:30 to 6 p.m. at the UC Davis Institute for Regenerative Cures facility tour, presented by: Dr. Jan Nolta and featuring patient advocate testimonies. A tour of the UC Davis Institute for Regenerative Cures will follow, beginning at 6:00 p.m. followed by a hands-on tour of Dr. Nolta's lab, beginning at 7:15 p.m.; Contact: Charles Casey (916) 734-9048

UC Merced, Merced, CA – will highlight the interdisciplinary research of the UC Merced Stem Cell Consortium, a faculty research group on campus with a free event that is open to the public. Visit stemcells.ucmerced.edu for more information.

The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, CA – is hosting an open house lab tour, stem cell demonstrations and light refreshments (reservations required) at the Stem Cell Shared Laboratory and Training Center. 1:30 - 5:00 PM. Space is limited, please contact: suzanne@scripps.edu (619) 804-3620 to reserve a spot.

UC Irvine, Irvine, CA - The UC Irvine Sue and Bill Gross Stem Cell Research Center.
Open House for K – 12 Educators, 4:00 – 6:00 PM – Meet UC Irvine scientists and listen to a panel discussion on cutting edge stem cell research in Aging and Alzheimer's disease. A tour of the stem cell research laboratory will follow. 101 Theory, Irvine, CA. Contact Lila at stemcell@uci.edu for more information.

Burnham Institute for Medical Research, La Jolla, CA – To celebrate Stem Cell Awareness Day, Burnham Institute for Medical Research will host "Everything You've Always Wanted to Know About Stem Cells", a behind-the-scenes look at the workings of a stem cell laboratory. Attendees can talk directly to research and view a variety of stem cell populations, as well as differentiated cell types like neurons and beating cardiomyocytes. To reserve your spot, contact Brandon Nelson at bnelson@Burnham.org or (858) 646-3100 x4408.

UC San Diego, San Diego, CA – the scientists, students, and staff of the UC San Diego Stem Cell Program labs invite patient advocates, patients, caregivers, and others to lab tours in UCSD's Stem Cell Labs on Wednesday, September 23, 2009. Four tours are offered, at 10 am, 11 am, 2 pm, and 3 pm. Tours of the stem cell labs include those renovated with under CIRM grant programs. Contact Jennifer Braswell directly to arrange for a tour. jbraswell@ucsd.edu; (858) 534-2412 office

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